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## Indepth Bipolar Disorder

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## What's New?

**Bipolar Disorder**, formerly known as Manic Depression, is a highly disruptive brain disorder. Since 1994 Pendulum.org has been the web's premier resource for bipolar information.

The [Pendulum Discussion Forums](#) are better than ever. Come in and chat with new friends in the [updated Bipolar section](#), or visit the expanded section [for friends and family](#).

Bipolar Disorder News ([click here for news archives](#))

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### [FDA Approves Zyprexa for Bipolar Adolescents](#) - December 7, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Medications](#) [Childhood Bipolar Disorder](#)  
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved Zyprexa (olanzapine) for treatment of schizophrenia and manic/mixed episodes associated with Bipolar I disorder in adolescents aged 13-17 years. This approval, announced on Dec. 4, comes with plenty of warnings for would be users of the drug. The updated Zyprexa label states that clinicians should take into consideration the increased potential for weight gain and hyperlipidemia in adolescents compared to adults and the potential for long-term risks, which in many cases, may lead them to consider prescribing other drugs first in adolescents. For additional reference review our Oct. 28 blog which [Read full story...](#)  
Posted by Michael Lane at [11:14 AM](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

### [FDA Approves Seroquel for Bipolar Children and Adolescents](#) - December 6, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Medications](#) [Childhood Bipolar Disorder](#)  
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced Friday that Seroquel (quetiapine fumarate) has been approved for the acute treatment of manic episodes associated with bipolar I disorder in children and adolescents (10-17 years of age), both as monotherapy (single-drug therapy) and as an adjunct to Lithium or Depakote (valproic acid). The FDA also approved Seroquel for the treatment of schizophrenia in adolescents (13-17 years of age) as monotherapy. "Bipolar mania and schizophrenia in children and adolescents, while rare, are serious disorders and it is important to have treatments approved for use in this patient population," said Howard Hutchinson, M.D., [Read full story...](#)  
Posted by Michael Lane at [9:31 PM](#) | [Comments \(3\)](#)

### [Ticket to Work Schedule Update](#) - December 1, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Employment Issues](#) [Government/Legal & Bipolar Disorder](#)

During the NAMI 2009 conference we met with representatives of the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program which provides financial incentives for small businesses to employ people with disabilities. This program has been retooled recently with the objective of making it easier and more lucrative for businesses to hire people who

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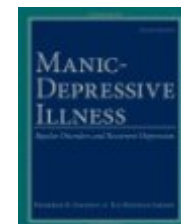
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suffer from bipolar disorder, depression and other Mental Illnesses. This program has just released a schedule of events in 17 states during December and January. For more information or to sign up for one of these program you can access Ticket to Work. If you own a small [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [8:41 PM](#) | [Comments \(5\)](#)

### [Psychosurgery: New techniques sure to raise old questions](#) - November 29, 2009

filed under [New Technology](#) [Psychosurgery](#)

When Americans hear the term "Brain Surgery" their first thought may be of Jack Nicholson's character in the 1975 movie "One Flew over the Cuckoo's nest" and the crippling lobotomy performed on him. Indeed, "Psychosurgery" was popularized in the United States during the 1930's and 1940's when the American physician Walter Freeman advocated the use of lobotomies to treat patients with various mental illnesses. Thousands of Americans were subjected to these brutal "procedures" to devastating effect. But, scientific inquiry and progress is a long and winding road; and, it should be no surprise that new, less invasive psychosurgeries are being [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [9:38 PM](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

### [FDA Approves Geodon for Bipolar Disorder](#) - November 23, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Medications](#) [Bipolar Disorder Research Study](#)

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the atypical antipsychotic Geodon (ziprasidone) for maintenance treatment of bipolar I disorder as an adjunct to lithium or Depakote (valproate) in adults. In 2004, the FDA approved Geodon for treatment of acute manic or mixed episodes in Bipolar 1 Disorder. The additional approval for maintenance treatment, announced by Pfizer on Nov. 20, gives doctors and patients another long-term use drug to help stabilize moods. Geodon was initially FDA approved, in 2001, to treat schizophrenia. Unlike other atypical antipsychotics, it appears that Geodon may not to be associated with weight gain. In [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [8:35 PM](#) | [Comments \(4\)](#)

### [Frontline Video explores Bipolar Disorder in children](#) - November 18, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Medications](#) [Bipolar Disorder Online Video](#) [Bipolar Disorder Websites](#) [Childhood Bipolar Disorder](#)

Frontline recently aired a program that explores the rapid increase in diagnoses of bipolar disorder in children during the past 7-8 years; the program is an update from earlier Frontline pieces which aired in 2001 and 2008. This program offers an overview of the current environment and attitude in the US vis-à-vis diagnosing young children with bipolar disorder and prescribing psychiatric medicines (many of which are "off label" for kids and adolescents). The video asserts that the rapid increase in diagnosis of bipolar disorder for kids is primarily a US phenomenon and conveys the heart wrenching uncertainty for families who [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [10:23 AM](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

### [Managing Bipolar Disorder: "Mood Mapping"](#) - November 17, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Mood Tracking](#)

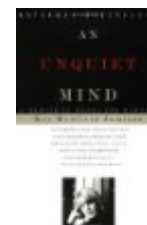
I've recently blogged about using Mood Tracking Solutions as a tool for those with bipolar disorder to help manage their lives (see Oct. 27 and Sept. 15 posts). I came across an interesting article which supports this notion. A UK based psychologist and bipolar patient, Dr. Liz Miller, has written a book: "Mood Mapping" which offers a method for bipolar patients to closely monitor their moods as a way to help manage their condition. Dr. Miller was a successful neurosurgeon when she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder at age 28; a series of personal setbacks associated with the bipolar condition [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [10:28 AM](#) | [Comments \(3\)](#)

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## **Personal Stories about bipolar disorder** - November 12, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Online Video](#) [Bipolar Disorder Personal Stories](#)

I came across an interesting set of Short Stories on the online BBC Health "Secret Life" section. These short clips feature eight people with bipolar disorder who were asked questions about how they first felt when they were diagnosed; their experiences of mania, depression and getting treatment; and whether they'd push a magic button and get rid of the condition if they could. Interestingly, when asked if they could "eliminate their bipolar condition with the magic touch of a button," at least half of them said they wouldn't push that button. Their answers are illuminating and no doubt our readers [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [3:10 PM](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

## **House passes Health Care Reform bill - All eyes on the Senate**

- November 10, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder and Insurance](#) [Government/Legal & Bipolar Disorder](#)

Last Saturday (Nov. 7) the House of Representatives passed the Health Care Reform bill (H.R. 3962) by a narrow margin of 220-215. The Health Care reform debate has moved over to the Senate side where a similar bill may be brought to the Senate Floor as early as next week. We'll keep you posted on the Senate side developments and monitor the key provisions that impact people with bipolar disorder and other mental illnesses. [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [1:08 PM](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)

## **Large Increase in Pediatric Bipolar Disorder?** - November 10, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Diagnosis Early Treatment](#) [Childhood Bipolar Disorder](#)

The Issue The steady drum beat of diagnosing kids and adolescents across the U.S. with mental illnesses seems to have quickened during the past few years. Increasingly, parents come out of meetings with school counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists et. al. with a diagnosis of pediatric bipolar disorder, early onset bipolar disorder and/or ADHD and a prescription for psychiatric medicines. These diagnoses can both calm and alarm parents. Several recent posts from Kimberly Read, a regular contributor to About.com regarding bipolar disorder, caught my eye. She cites a whopping 4,000 percent increase in pediatric bipolar disorder; I was intrigued by this statistic [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [12:36 PM](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)

## **Health Care Reform bill with provisions for bipolar patients moving toward a House vote** - November 6, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Advocacy](#) [Bipolar Disorder and Insurance](#) [Government/Legal & Bipolar Disorder](#)

In yesterday's blog, I indicated that the Health Care Reform Bill is moving toward a vote in the House of Representatives. The expected vote is now being considered for Sunday (Nov 8) or perhaps later. President Obama is planning to go to Capitol Hill on Saturday to lobby key swing vote Representatives who could make the difference in passing the Health Care Reform Bill. There are several important provisions for bipolar patients and people with other mental illnesses (see yesterday's blog for these points). Today and tomorrow are great days to call your Representative's Washington D.C. office and indicate your [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [11:27 AM](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

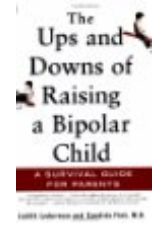
## **Health Care Bill has key provisions for bipolar disorder patients** - November 5, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Advocacy](#) [Bipolar Disorder and Insurance](#) [Government/Legal & Bipolar Disorder](#)

Last week, the House of Representatives created a new bill, H.R. 3962, which combines previous legislation passed by three House committees. This newly created legislation represents the House version of Health Care reform which is scheduled for a House vote this

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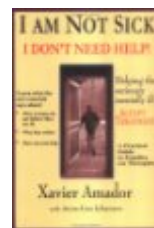
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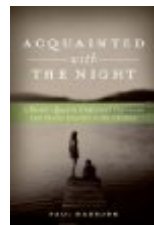
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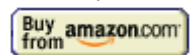
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Saturday (Nov 7). During the past two days, two large lobbying groups, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and the American Medical Association (AMA), have thrown their support behind H.R. 3962. A Senate version which combines earlier legislation that passed through two Committees is being drafted and is expected to be introduced in the near term. H.R. 3962 [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [2:54 PM](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)

### **[Government program supports Employment for people with bipolar disorder and other disabilities](#)** - October 29, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Employment Issues](#) [Government/Legal & Bipolar Disorder](#)

During the NAMI 2009 conference we met with representatives of the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program which provides financial incentives for small businesses to employ people with disabilities. This program has been retooled recently with the objective of making it easier and more lucrative for businesses to hire people who suffer from bipolar disorder, depression and other Mental Illnesses. Earlier today, we received a note from this program with a schedule of events in 15 states during November. For more information or to sign up for one of these program you can access Ticket to Work. If you [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [2:37 PM](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)

### **[Children taking meds for bipolar disorder can effect rapid weight gain](#)** - October 28, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Medications](#) [Bipolar Disorder Research Study](#) [Childhood Bipolar Disorder](#)

Children taking psychiatric medications for bipolar disorder and other mental illnesses can experience rapid weight gain according to a new study published in the Oct. 28 The Journal of the American Medicine Association. The findings also link some of these drugs to metabolic changes such as elevated levels of cholesterol and triglycerides. The Study monitored 272 children from the Queens, NY area, ages 4-19 (with an average age of 14), over a six year period (2001-2007); these children were receiving atypical antipsychotics such as Abilify, Risperdal, Seroquel, and Zyprexa for the first time. These medicines are considered 2nd generation drugs [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [11:45 AM](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)

### **[Review of Mood Tracking Software: MoodTracker.com](#)** - October 27, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Coping](#) [Bipolar Disorder Mood Tracking](#)

MoodTracker.com Our findings are drawn from conversations with the MoodTracker.com CEO (David Hale), current users of MoodTracker.com, and our independent review of MoodTracker.com. We plan to monitor this software, stay in touch with active users and provide subsequent updates. We use pseudonyms to ensure MoodTracker users' privacy. What is MoodTracker.com? MoodTracker.com is a web-based Mood Tracking system which helps people who suffer from bipolar depression or depression track relevant information & data associated with their illness. This information includes: establishing a daily mood chart; charting a patient's "Mood History;" establishing a patient's Medical History; building in Support Alerts which offer [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [9:51 AM](#) | [Comments \(5\)](#)

### **[College Survey: Bipolar Disorder and Depression on the rise](#)** - October 26, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder College Students](#) [Bipolar Disorder Research Study](#)

We recently posted a blog (Oct 19) about the increase in bipolar disorder and depression on college campuses. We cited an NPR Story on "Morning Edition" which highlighted actions that Stanford students are taking to educate other students about Mental Illness. We also cited a multi-decade study which surveyed college counseling professionals across the U.S. We've tracked down the survey, a comprehensive study which offers a look at the intensity and incidence of Mental Illness on

colleges dating back to the early 1980s as well as a snapshot of the current state of counseling services on US colleges. The survey [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [8:53 PM](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)

### **[Bring Change 2 Mind Launches today](#)** - October 21, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Advocacy](#) [Bipolar Disorder Education](#) [Bipolar Disorder Online Video](#) [Bipolar Disorder Personal Stories](#) [Bipolar Disorder Websites](#)

A new high-profile organization, Bring Change 2 Mind, is being launched today through a series of public service announcements (PSAs). The PSAs address the stigma of Mental Illness and raise awareness of the prevalence of Mental Illness in the U.S.; they are directed by Ron Howard and feature Glenn Close. Glenn Close is working in concert with several leading organizations to create Bring Change 2 Mind. For more information, see [www.bringchange2mind.org](http://www.bringchange2mind.org). Ms. Close has a sister, Jessie, who suffers from bipolar disorder. I must admit that I became a bit emotional when watching a few of the clips available at [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [10:34 AM](#) | [Comments \(3\)](#)

### **[Dramatic increase in bipolar depression and depression in colleges](#)** - October 19, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder College Students](#) [Bipolar Disorder Personal Stories](#) [Bipolar Disorder Symptoms & Diagnosis](#)

Following last Friday's post (Initial onset of Bipolar during College years), I heard an interesting NPR story today on "Morning Edition." The story focused on students at Stanford University who are taking the initiative to help educate other students about the prevalence of depression and bipolar depression in colleges across the United States. These students have created theatrical productions which touch upon social issues including the wide prevalence of mental illness on college campuses. Their intended audience: patients who may be reticent to accept or discuss their illness and people in dorm rooms who often unknowingly create hostile environments for [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [3:13 PM](#) | [Comments \(4\)](#)

### **[Initial onset of Bipolar during College years](#)** - October 16, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Diagnosis Early Treatment](#) [Bipolar Disorder College Students](#) [Bipolar Disorder Symptoms & Diagnosis](#)

This recent article <http://healthnews.uc.edu/news/?/9324> caught my attention. It discusses the notion that depression in young college students can begin to manifest itself just weeks after school starts; at that time, the "the honeymoon period" is over and the ongoing stress of pursuing academic performance kicks in. Bipolar patients often experience a first depression during college. The first onset of a manic or depressed mood characteristic of bipolar disorder usually occurs during the late teens and early 20's; at least half of all cases start before age 25\*. Attending college offers numerous triggers to set off a bad mood. The difference [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [2:54 PM](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

### **[Researchers find impact of single gene on Bipolar Disorder - Question use of Lithium for Children](#)** - October 13, 2009

filed under [Bipolar Disorder Biology](#) [Bipolar Disorder Genes](#) [Bipolar Disorder Medications](#) [Childhood Bipolar Disorder](#)

Summary A new study suggests that a single gene, called GSK-3, controls the signals that determine how many neurons actually end up composing the brain. This has important implications for patients with neuropsychiatric illness, as links have recently been drawn between GSK-3 and schizophrenia, depression and bipolar disorder. In populating the growing brain, neural stem cells must strike a delicate balance between two key processes - proliferation, in which the cells multiply to provide plenty of starting materials - and differentiation, in which those materials evolve into functioning neurons. If the stem cells proliferate too much, they could grow out [Read full story...](#)

Posted by Michael Lane at [1:38 PM](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

[more...](#)

**Great News!** Sister Leslie has brought the Bipolar Planet out of the backwaters of the Web. The site is at [www.bipolarplanet.com](http://www.bipolarplanet.com). Writings, poetry, and artwork by the tragically untalented Sister Leslie and her bipolar cohorts, and Leslie's new blog, [Into the Void](#): *Back off man, I'm co-creating my reality.*



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The information at this web site is to help consumers, family members and mental health workers to make informed decisions about the care and treatment of bipolar disorder, AKA manic depression. These pages are not a substitute for consultation with your counselor, therapist, doctor, or psychiatrist.

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